

Documents of American History II

M2010

1950s: Communist Control Act of 1954

U.S. Statutes at Large, Public Law 637, Chp. 886, p. 775-780

AN ACT

To outlaw the Communist Party, to prohibit members of Communist organizations from serving in certain representative capacities, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Communist Control Act of 1954".

Findings of Fact

Sec. 2. The Congress hereby finds and declares that the Communist Party of the United States, although purportedly a political party, is in fact an instrumentality of a conspiracy to overthrow the Government of the United States. It constitutes an authoritarian dictatorship within a republic, demanding for itself the rights and privileges accorded to political parties, but denying to all others the liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. Unlike political parties, which evolve their policies and programs through public means, by the reconciliation of a wide variety of individual views, and submit those policies and programs to the electorate at large for approval or disapproval, the policies and programs of the Communist Party are secretly prescribed for it by the foreign leaders of the world Communist movement. Its members have no part in determining its goals, and are not permitted to voice dissent to party objectives. Unlike members of political parties, members of the Communist Party are recruited for indoctrination with respect to its objectives and methods, and are organized, instructed, and disciplined to carry into action slavishly the assignments given them by their hierarchical chieftains. Unlike political parties, the Communist Party acknowledges no constitutional or statutory limitations upon its conduct or upon that of its members. The Communist Party is relatively small numerically, and gives scant indication of capacity ever to attain its ends by lawful political means. The peril inherent in its operation arises not from its numbers, but from its failure to acknowledge any limitation as to the nature of its activities, and its dedication to the proposition that the present constitutional Government of the United States ultimately must be brought to ruin by any available means, including resort to force and violence. Holding that doctrine, its role as the agency of a hostile foreign power renders its existence a clear present and continuing danger to the security of the United States. It is the means whereby individuals are seduced into the service of the world Communist movement, trained to do its bidding, and directed and controlled in the conspiratorial performance of their revolutionary services. Therefore, the Communist Party should be outlawed.

Proscribed Organizations

Sec. 3. The Communist Party of the United States, or any successors of such party regardless of the assumed name, whose object or purpose is to overthrow the Government of the United States, or the government of any State, Territory, District, or possession thereof, or the government of any political subdivision therein by force and violence, are not entitled to any of the rights, privileges, and immunities attendant upon legal bodies created under the jurisdiction of the laws of the United States or any political subdivision thereof; and whatever rights, privileges, and immunities which have heretofore been granted to said party or any subsidiary organization by reason of the laws of the United States or any political subdivision thereof, are hereby terminated: Provided, however, That nothing in this section shall be construed as amending the Internal Security Act of 1950, as amended.

Sec. 4. Whoever knowingly and willfully becomes or remains a member of (1) the Communist Party, or (2) any other organization having for one of its purposes or objectives the establishment, control conduct, seizure, or overthrow of the Government of the United States, or the government of any State or political subdivision thereof, by the use of force or violence, with knowledge of the purpose or objective of such organization shall be

subject to all the provisions and penalties of the Internal Security Act of 1950, as amended, as a member of a "Communist-action" organization.

(b) For the purposes of this section, the term "Communist Party" means the organization now known as the Communist Party of the United States of America, the Communist Party of any State or subdivision thereof, and any unit or subdivision of any such organization, whether or not any change is hereafter made in the name thereof.

Sec. 5. In determining membership or participation in the Communist Party or any other organization defined in this Act, or knowledge of the purpose or objective of such party or organization, the jury, under instructions from the court, shall consider evidence, if presented, as to whether the accused person:

- (1) Has been listed to his knowledge as a member in any book or any of the lists, records, correspondence, or any other document of the organization;
- (2) Has made financial contribution to the organization in dues, assessments, loans, or in any other form;
- (3) Has made himself subject to the discipline of the organization in any form whatsoever;
- (4) Has executed orders, plans, or directives of any kind of the organization;
- (5) Has acted as an agent, courier, messenger, correspondent, organizer, or in any other capacity in behalf of the organization;
- (6) Has conferred with officers or other members of the organization in behalf of any plan or enterprise of the organization;
- (7) Has been accepted to his knowledge as an officer or member of the organization or as one to be called upon for services by other officers or members of the organization;
- (8) Has written, spoken or in any other way communicated by signal, semaphore, sign, or in any other form of communication orders, directives, or plans of the organization;
- (9) Has prepared documents, pamphlets, leaflets, books, or any other type of publication in behalf of the objectives and purposes of the organization;
- (10) Has mailed, shipped, circulated, distributed, delivered, or in any other way sent or delivered to others material or propaganda of any kind in behalf of the organization;
- (11) Has advised, counseled or in any other way imparted information, suggestions, recommendations to officers or members of the organization or to anyone else in behalf of the objectives of the organization;
- (12) Has indicated by word, action, conduct, writing or in any other way a willingness to carry out in any manner and to any degree the plans, designs, objectives, or purposes of the organization;
- (13) Has in any other way participated in the activities, planning, actions, objectives, or purposes of the organization;
- (14) The enumeration of the above subjects of evidence on membership or participation in the Communist Party or any other organization as above defined, shall not limit the inquiry into and consideration of any other subject of evidence on membership and participation as herein stated.

Subversive Activities Control Act Amendment

Sec. 6. Subsection 5 (a) (1) of the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. 784) is amended by striking out the period at the end thereof and inserting lieu thereof a semicolon and the following: "or "(E) to hold office or employment with any labor organization, as that term is defined in section 2 (5) of the National Labor Relations Act, as amended (29 U. S. C. 152), or to represent any employer in any matter or proceeding arising or pending under that Act."

Communist-Infiltrated Organizations

Sec. 7. (a) Section 3 of the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1950 (50 U. S. C. 782) is amended by inserting, immediately after paragraph (4) thereof, the following new paragraph:

"(4A) The term 'Communist-infiltrated organization' means any organization in the United States (other than a Communist-action organization or a Communist-front organization) which (A) is substantially directed, dominated, or controlled by an individual or individuals who are, or who within three years have been actively engaged in, giving aid or support to a Communist- action organization, a Communist foreign government, or the world Communist movement referred to in section 2 of this title, and (B) is serving, or within three years has served, as a means for (i) the giving of aid or support to any such organization, government, or movement, or (ii) the impairment of the military strength of the United States or its industrial capacity to furnish logistical or other material support required by its Armed Forces: Provided, however, That any labor organization which is an affiliate in good standing of a national federation or other labor organization whose policies and activities have

been directed to opposing Communist organizations, any Communist foreign government, or the world Communist movement, shall be presumed prima facie not to be a 'Communist-infiltrated organization'."

(b) Paragraph (5) of such section is amended to read as follows:

"(5) The term 'Communist organization' means any Communist-action organization, Communist-front organization, or Communist-infiltrated organization."

(c) Subsections 5 (c) and 6 (c) of such Act are repealed.

Sec. 8. (a) Section 10 of such Act (50 U. S. C. 789) is amended by inserting, immediately after the words "final order of the Board requiring it to register under section 7", the words "or determining that it is a Communist-infiltrated organization".

(b) Subsections (a) and (b) of section 11 of such Act (50 U. S. C. 790) are amended by inserting immediately preceding the period at the end of each such subsection, the following: "or determining that it is a Communist-infiltrated organization".

Sec. 9. (a) Subsection 12 (e) of such Act (50 U. S. C. 791) is amended by-

(1) striking out the period at the end thereof and inserting in lieu thereof a semicolon and the word "and"; and
(2) inserting at the end thereof the following new paragraph:

"(3) upon any application made under subsection (a) or subsection (b) of section 13A of this title, to determine whether any organization is a Communist-infiltrated organization."

(b) The section caption to section 13 of such Act (50 U. S. C. 792) is amended to read as follows: "Registration Proceedings before the Board".

Sec. 10. Such Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 13 thereof, the following new section:

"Proceedings with Respect to Communist-Infiltrated Organizations

"Sec. 13A. (a) Whenever the Attorney General has reason to believe that any organization is a Communist-infiltrated organization, he may file with the Board and serve upon such organization a petition for a determination that such organization is a Communist-infiltrated organization. In any proceeding so instituted, two or more affiliated organizations may be named as joint respondents. Whenever any such petition is accompanied by a certificate of the Attorney General to the effect that the proceeding so instituted is one of exceptional public importance, such proceeding shall be set for hearing at the earliest possible time and all proceedings therein before the Board or any court shall be expedited to the greatest practicable extent.

"(b) Any organization which has been determined under this section to be a Communist- infiltrated organization may, within six months after such determination, file with the Board and serve upon the Attorney General a petition for a determination that such organization no longer is a Communist- infiltrated organization.

"(c) Each such petition shall be verified under oath, and shall contain a statement of the facts relied upon in support thereof. Upon the filing of any such petition, the Board shall serve upon each party to such proceeding a notice specifying the time and place for hearing upon such petition. No such hearing shall be conducted within twenty days after the service of such notice.

"(d) The provisions of subsections (c) and (d) of section 13 shall apply to hearings conducted under this section, except that upon the failure of any organization named as a party in any petition filed by or duly served upon it pursuant to this section to appear at any hearing upon such petition, the Board may conduct such hearing in the absence of such organization and may enter such order under this section as the Board shall determine to be warranted by evidence presented at such hearing.

"(e) In determining whether any organization is a Communist-infiltrated organization, the Board shall consider-

"(1) to what extent, if any, the effective management of the affairs of such organization is conducted by one or more individuals who are, or within two years have been, (A) members, agents, or representatives of any Communist organization, and Communist foreign government, or the world Communist movement referred to in section 2 of this title, with knowledge of the nature and purpose thereof, or (B) engaged in giving aid or support to any such organization, government, or movement with knowledge of the nature and purpose thereof;

"(2) to what extent, if any, the policies of such organization are, or within three years have been, formulated and carried out pursuant to the direction or advice of any member, agent or representative of any such organization, government, or movement;

"(3) to what extent, if any, the personnel and resources of such organization are, or within three years have been, used to further or promote the objectives of any such Communist organization, government, or movement;

"(4) to what extent, if any, such organization within three years has received from, or furnished to or for the use of, any such Communist organization, government, or movement any funds or other material assistance;

"(5) to what extent, if any, such organization is, or within three years has been, affiliated in any way with any such Communist organization, government, or movement;

"(6) to what extent, if any, the affiliation of such organization, or of any individual or individuals who are members thereof or who manage its affairs, with any such Communist organization, government, or movement is concealed from or is not disclosed to the membership of such organization; and

"(7) to what extent, if any, such organization or any of its members or managers are, or within three years have been, knowingly engaged-

"(A) in any conduct punishable under section 4 or 15 of this Act or under chapter 37, 105, or 115 of title 18 of the United States Code; or

"(B) with intent to impair the military strength of the United States or its industrial capacity to furnish logistical or other support required by its armed forces, in any activity resulting in or contributing to any such impairment.

"(f) After hearing upon any petition filed under this section, the Board shall (1) make a support in writing in which it shall state its findings as to the facts and its conclusions with respect to the issues presented by such petition, (2) enter its order granting or denying the determination sought by such petition, and (3) serve upon each party to the proceeding a copy of such order. Any order granting any determination on the question whether any organization is a Communist-infiltrated organization shall become final as provided in section 14 (b) of this Act.

"(g) When any order has been entered by the Board under this section with respect to any labor organization or employer (as these terms are defined by section 2 of the National Labor Relations Act, as amended, and which are organizations within the meaning of section 3 of the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1950), the Board shall serve a true and correct copy of such order upon the National Labor Relations Board and shall publish in the Federal Register a statement of the substance of such order and its effective date.

"(h) When there is in effect a final order of the Board determining that any such labor organization is a Communist-action organization, a Communist-front organization, or a Communist- infiltrated organization, such labor organization shall be ineligible to-

"(1) act as representative of any employee within the meaning or for the purposes of section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act, as amended (29 U.S.C. 157);

"(2) serve as an exclusive representative of employees of any bargaining unit under section 9 of such Act, as amended (29 U.S.C. 159);

"(3) make, or obtain any hearing upon, any charge under section 10 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 160); or

"(4) exercise any other right or privilege, or receive any other benefit, substantive or procedural, provided by such Act for labor organizations.

"(i) When an order of the Board determining that any such labor organization is a Communist-infiltrated organization has become final, and such labor organization theretofore has been certified under the National Labor Relations Act, as amended, as a representative of employees in any bargaining unit-

"(1) a question of representation affecting commerce, within the meaning of section 9 (c) of such Act, shall be deemed to exist with respect to such bargaining unit; and

"(2) the National Labor Relations Board, upon petition of not less than 20 per centum of the employees in such bargaining unit or any person or persons acting in their behalf, shall under section 9 of such Act (notwithstanding any limitation of time contained therein) direct elections in such bargaining unit or any subdivision thereof (A) for the selection of a representative thereof for collective bargaining purposes, and (B) to determine whether the employees thereof desire to rescind any authority previously granted to such labor organization to enter into any agreement with their employer pursuant to section 8 (a) (3) (ii) of such Act.

"(j) When there is in effect a final order of the Board determining that any such employer is a Communist-infiltrated organization, such employer shall be ineligible to-

"(1) file any petition for an election under section 9 of the National Labor Relations Act, as amended (29 U.S.C. 157), or participate in any proceeding under such section; or

"(2) make or obtain any hearing upon any charge under section 10 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 160); or

"(3) exercise any other right or privilege or receive any other benefit, substantive or procedural, provided by such Act for employers."

Sec. 11. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 14 of such Act (50 U.S.C. 793) are amended by inserting in each such subsection, immediately after the words "section 13", a comma and the following: "or subsection (f) of section 13A,".

Sec. 12. If any provision of this title or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the remainder of the title, and the application of such provisions to other persons or circumstances, shall not be affected thereby.

Approved August 24, 1954, 9:40 a.m., M.S.T.

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